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May 3, 2019

Thank you for subscribing to my e-newsletter. Below you will find updates from federal, state and local agencies on events from the past week and the week ahead.

We have officially made it to May. We are now in the home stretch of the legislative session and quickly approaching deadlines. Next Thursday will be the last day a House Bill can heard on Second Reading in the Chamber. The final calendars are being prepared now and should be set by Monday.

Here is a quick update on my bills:

- HB 3 - Voted out of the Senate Education Committee on Wednesday
- HB 766 - Passed the House and Referred to Senate Higher Education Committee
- HB 791 - Passed the House and Set for a Hearing in Senate Finance on May 6th
- HB 802 - Set on Floor Calendar for May 6th
- HB 831 - Set on Floor Calendar for May 6th
- HB 907 - Currently in Calendars Committee
- HB 909 - Heard in Environmental Regulation Committee on May 1st
- HB 911 - Passed the House on May 3rd
- HB 1652 - Passed the House on May 3rd
- HB 1725 - Passed the House and Referred to Senate Higher Education Committee
- HB 2983 - Passed the House on May 2nd
- HB 3904 - Passed the House on May 2nd
- HB 3906 - Currently in Calendars Committee
- HB 3599 - Passed the House and Referred to Senate State Affairs Committee
- HB 3913 - Passed the House and Set for a Hearing in Senate Business & Commerce on May 7th
- HJR 3/HB 4621 - Currently in Calendars Committee
- HJR 151/HB 4611 - Passed the House and Referred to Senate Finance Committee

As we get closer to the end of the session, things will begin moving quickly. For more up-to-date information, please follow us on social media. Tune in any day to watch us by clicking here: www.house.texas.gov.

Should you have questions regarding anything in this newsletter, please feel free to contact us directly using the information provided at the bottom of this email.

Sincerely,



May 2019 Calendar

Download my May 2019 calendar by clicking the link below. This month is full of events in and around Texas that could be fun or useful to you and your family! This new format allows you to save the document for printing or sending to your family members.

Keep watch for these updated calendars at the beginning of each month. Important local and legislative dates and events will be posted here.



May 2019

The month of May is a special time in Texas. It is a time of celebration and reflection. The month of May is a special time in Texas. It is a time of celebration and reflection.

State Representative Dan Huberty

[Click Here to View and Download This Month's Calendar!](#)

Updates from Austin

TxDOT Urges Drivers to "Look Twice for Motorcycles"

As spring weather draws more motorcyclists onto roadways the risk of fatalities increases. Last year 417 motorcyclists died on Texas roadways, an average of more than one fatality a day. It's a number the Texas Department of Transportation is working to reduce by asking motorists to be extra vigilant.

TxDOT is launching "Share the Road: Look Twice for Motorcycles" – a campaign supporting National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month in May. "Share the Road: Look Twice for Motorcycles" urges drivers to be extra cautious, since motorcyclists are more difficult to see while on the road and are less protected than other motorists.

"Last year motorcycle fatalities were reduced by 17 %, which is a big step forward; still one death is too many for the Lone Star State," said TxDOT Executive Director James Bass. "As motorcyclists hit the road to enjoy the open air and beautiful scenery, it's important that vehicle drivers and motorcyclists remain alert and look out for each other on the road. We want everyone to enjoy what Texas offers and reach their destinations safely,"

One of the most common crashes between motorcyclists and drivers occurs when drivers make left turns at intersections, due to motorists' difficulty judging the distance and speed of motorcycles. TxDOT cautions drivers to be extra vigilant when approaching, turning, or driving through an intersection, as 30% of Texas motorcycle deaths in 2018 were intersection-related.

A motorcyclist's "braking" is not always obvious to motorists. Motorcycles decelerate faster than vehicles and motorcyclists can often downshift instead of applying the brake, especially when driving around a curve. This means at times brake lights will not be engaged to signal that the motorcycle is slowing down. It is important for motorists to allow for extra distance when they are behind motorcycles.

TxDOT is urging motorists to:

- Look twice for motorcycles, especially at intersections.
- Always assume motorcycles are closer than they appear to be, and avoid turning in front of an oncoming motorcycle.
- Use turn signals and check blind spots before changing lanes.
- Always maintain a safe following distance.
- Give motorcyclists a full lane, especially when passing.
- Obey posted speed limits.

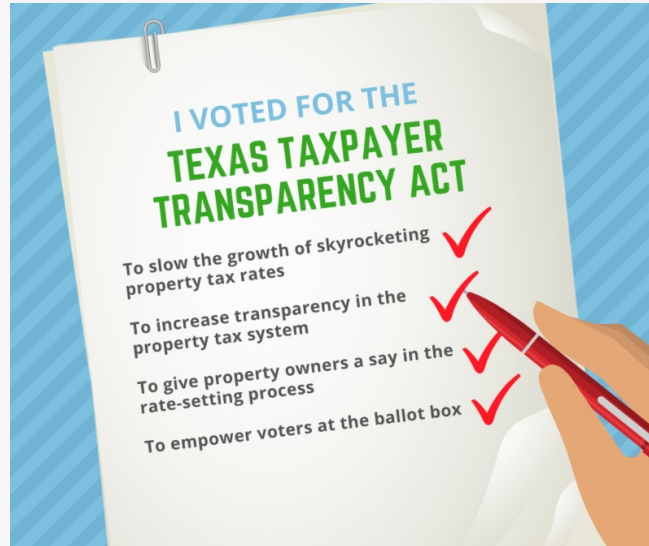
This year's "Share the Road: Look Twice for Motorcycles" campaign will conduct the following events featuring virtual reality games designed to educate drivers and motorcyclists about the importance of watching out for each other. Campaign tour stops include:

- May 3 – El Paso
- May 10 – Corpus Christi
- May 11 – Houston (Sugar Land)

- May 12 – Austin
- May 17 – Dallas-Fort Worth (Frisco)
- May 18 – Midland
- May 19 – San Antonio

“Share the Road: Look Twice for Motorcycles” is a key component of #EndTheStreakTX, a larger grassroots effort that encourages drivers to make safer choices while on the road. Since November 8, 2000, at least one person has died on Texas roadways every single day, and that’s why #EndTheStreakTX asks all Texans to commit to helping end the streak of daily deaths on our roadways. To learn more about the campaign, visit TxDOT’s [website](#). For media inquiries, contact TxDOT Houston District Public Information Office at (713) 802-5076.

SB 2: The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act



Our current property tax system lacks transparency, which discourages taxpayers from getting involved. Senate Bill 2, the Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act, provides critical transparency mechanisms that empower taxpayers and voters with a say in the property tax rate-setting process.

A more open process is beneficial to everyone, and taxpayers deserve every opportunity to weigh in on how their taxes are being raised and spent. The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act encourages taxpayers and local governments to work together in setting a budget and adopt property tax rates that meet the needs and obligations of their community.

This bill gives property owners the tools they need to make informed decisions about their property taxes by disclosing online and on tax notices who is proposing a rate increase, by how much, and when and where they can go to make their voice heard at a public hearing. It also gives taxpayers the option of filling out a short online form to provide their opinion on the proposed rates, which is then sent directly to the taxing unit.

The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act is not a revenue cap, it's a trigger. Current rollback election requirements put an unnecessary burden on taxpayers by requiring them to gather enough signatures to petition for an election. This bill empowers voters because it automatically triggers an election to ratify a property tax rate if it's raised above a certain amount (the rollback rate). The Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act provides property tax reform. The budget and school finance legislation provide \$2.7 billion for property tax relief. All three work together.

Property tax and school finance reform are nearly impossible to separate. That's why the final passage of the Texas Taxpayer Transparency Act is contingent upon the final passage of the House's landmark public education bill, House Bill 3.

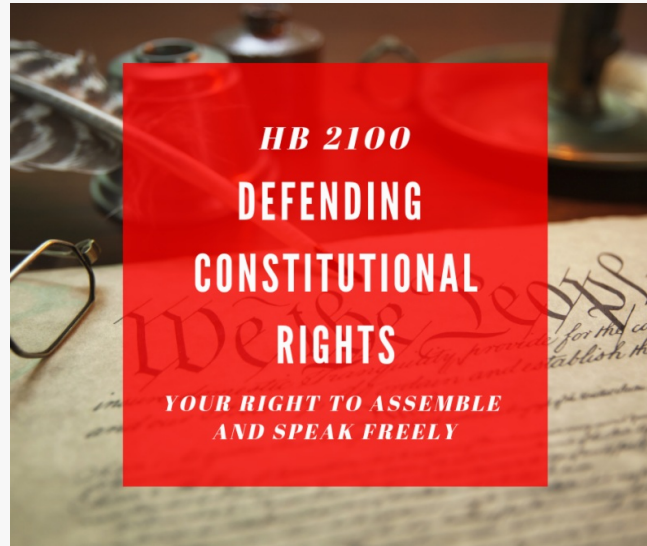
Highlights:

- Lowers the rollback rate to 3.5% for most taxing units and 2% for school districts
- Maintains the current rollback rate for special taxing units with unique situations like junior colleges, hospital districts, and those with an M&O tax rate of \$0.025 (per \$100) or less
- Makes the final passage of this bill contingent upon final passage of the House's plan for school finance (HB 3)
- Institutes an automatic November ratification election when a taxing unit adopts a property tax rate exceeding the rollback rate
- Calculates how much one would owe under the proposed tax rates and discloses the "No

New Revenue" tax rate for each taxing unit on an individual's tax notice (like a line-item receipt)

- Requires the same property tax notice to include the time, date and location of public hearings where property tax rates will be deliberated or adopted
- Further enhances tax notices by requiring local governments to include a chart comparing what the recipient paid in property taxes last year versus what they will pay this year
- Gives taxpayers the option of filling out a short form -- attached to their electronic tax notice -- that will generate a message outlining the taxpayer's stance on their tax rate before automatically sending it to the appropriate taxing unit

HB 2100: Free Speech



State Representative Dan Huberty joined their Texas House colleagues in passing House Bill 2100, which guarantees public higher education institutions do not infringe upon the expressive constitutional rights of students to speak and assemble freely on college campuses. House Bill 2100 accomplishes this goal by establishing university policies that are committed to protecting an individual's right to express themselves so long as they do not interfere with someone else's ability to do so themselves.

While the U.S. Constitution and Texas Constitution state that citizens have the right to speak and assemble freely in the First Amendment, some colleges put limitations on the expressive activities taking place on their campuses. Higher education institutions have disinvited speakers, created 'free speech zones' confining speech to certain areas, and adopted limits on topics and locations for demonstrations.

House Bill 2100 requires public universities in Texas to establish a policy supporting expressive activities and ensure that students will be informed of their official policy. The bill also guarantees that the common outdoor areas of the institution's campus are traditional public forums and permits any person lawfully present to engage in expressive activities in those areas freely. These protections are applied equally to all students, student groups, and student organizations.

[Read more about House Bill 2100 here.](#)

Abbott Announces Additional Grant Funding for Border Operations

Governor Greg Abbott announced \$9 million in additional Operation Stonegarden Grant Program (OPSG) funding to increase operational capabilities of federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies along the border. This announcement follows a [previous release](#) of \$4 million in grant funding as part of the \$30 million in Operations Orders approved by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the current year's grant program.

"Texas' border security efforts require a variety of strategies and approaches to keep our communities safe, and these additional grants will provide much-needed resources to law

enforcement agencies to maintain their robust operations," said Governor Abbott. "I am committed to working alongside the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to secure our southern border, and I thank the men and women of law enforcement for working tirelessly to keep our border communities secure."

These OPSG awards include funds for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), Kickapoo Traditional Tribe, and 16 other local law enforcement agencies located in the counties of Cameron, Kenedy, McMullen, Presidio, Starr, Sutton, Val Verde, and Webb. The awards will support:

- Upgrades to essential flight displays, global positioning systems, and overtime for DPS personnel supporting United States Border Patrol (USBP) with air patrols in each BP Sector along the Texas/Mexico border
- Body armor and overtime for Town of Laguna Vista officers participating in border patrol operations
- Specialized patrol vehicles for officers and deputies working overtime from the City of Falfurrias, City of Laredo, McMullen, Refugio, and Starr counties, as well as the Kickapoo Tribe
- Overtime and other operational costs for local agencies such as the counties listed above and the cities of Eagle Pass, Harlingen, Junction, and Town of Combes

OPSG promotes a layered and coordinated approach to border security by directing critical resources to fund additional overtime for law enforcement personnel, equipment, and related operational costs. These funds ensure that law enforcement partners are equipped with the resources they need to confront the complex and dynamic challenges that exist along the Texas border.

Through the OPSG, eligible local units of government and federally recognized tribal governments work in coordination with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and USBP to develop Operations Orders that support border security needs identified by each USBP Sector. Once all federal reviews of planned Operations are complete, Texas is able to obligate the funds to participating law enforcement agencies.

The Homeland Security Grants Division (HSGD), a subset of the Governor's Public Safety Office (PSO), is responsible for administering OPSG funding as part of the larger Homeland Security Grant Program from DHS/FEMA. Local units of government along the southern border that are interested in learning more about this program should [contact one of the five \(5\) USBP Sectors](#) consisting of Big Bend, Del Rio, El Paso, Laredo and Rio Grande Valley, or the PSO at 512-463-1919.

Rep. Huberty's Legislative Agenda

To see a list of Rep. Huberty's filed legislation, [click here](#).

[HJR 3](#) - Proposing a constitutional amendment to provide funding for the cost of maintaining and operating the public school system and to reduce school district ad valorem tax rates through an increase in the state sales and use tax rate.

[HJR 121](#) - Proposing a constitutional amendment allowing increased distributions to the available school fund.

[HB 3](#) - Relating to public school finance and public education.

[HB 76](#) - Relating to cardiac assessments of high school participants in extracurricular athletic activities sponsored or sanctioned by the University Interscholastic League.

[HB 734](#) - Relating to the carrying of concealed or holstered handguns by certain handgun license holders attending a meeting of the board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school.

[HB 766](#) - Relating to exemptions for disabled peace officers and fire fighters from payment of tuition and fees at public institutions of higher education.

[HB 791](#) - Relating to the definition of volunteer fire department for purposes of certain motor fuel tax exemptions.

[HB 802](#) - Relating to voting rights and eligibility for office of residents of certain districts subject to a strategic partnership agreement.

[HB 813](#) - Relating to money used by counties that participate in the low-income vehicle repair assistance, retrofit, and accelerated vehicle retirement program.

[HB 831](#) - Relating to the residency requirement to be eligible for public office.

[HB 851](#) - Relating to the use of individual graduation committees and other alternative methods to satisfy certain public high school graduation requirements.

[HB 907](#) - Relating to the penalty for failure to register certain aggregate production operations with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

[HB 908](#) - Relating to the regulation of aggregate production operation by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; increasing an administrative penalty.

[HB 909](#) - Relating to best management practices for aggregate production operations.

[HB 911](#) - Relating to the creation and functions of the Lake Houston Watershed Commission.

[HB 1652](#) - Relating to the public resale by means of a public auction using online bidding and sale of property purchased by a taxing unit at an ad valorem tax sale.

[HB 1671](#) - Relating to water quality protection areas.

[HB 1725](#) - Relating to retired members of the Texas State Guard.

[HB 2795](#) - Relating to a one-time supplemental annuity payment to certain retirees and beneficiaries of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.

[HB 2961](#) - Relating to an allotment under the foundation school program for students with dyslexia or related disorders.

[HB 2983](#) - Relating to the administration to public school students in certain grades of state-administered assessment instruments.

[HB 3599](#) - Relating to certain increases in benefits under the firefighters' relief and retirement fund in certain municipalities.

[HB 3904](#) - Relating to public school accountability, including certain assessment requirements, performance standards, and sanctions, including sanctions affecting educator contracts, and to providing alternative methods to satisfy certain public high school graduation requirements.

[HB 3906](#) - Relating to the adoption and administration of assessment instruments used to assess the performance of public school students.

[HB 3913](#) - Relating to an exception from required disclosure under the public information law for certain personal information obtained by certain flood control districts.

[HB 3967](#) - Relating to access to certain health information of public school students during an emergency evacuation.

[HB 4334](#) - Relating to the creation of the office of inspector general at the Texas Education Agency to investigate the administration of public education.

[HB 4335](#) - Relating to the assessment and collection of ad valorem taxes imposed by a school district.

[HB 4611](#) - Relating to certain distributions to the available school fund.

[HB 4621](#) - Relating to the imposition of sales and use taxes and the allocation of certain revenue from sales and use taxes to school district property tax relief and public education; authorizing the imposition of a tax.

Constituent Resources

Need Assistance?

Our office is always ready to assist you. Call or email us and we will do our best to help. Many State Agencies also have hotlines or citizen assistance offices to assist you. That contact information is available at this link, in alphabetical order:

<http://www.lrl.texas.gov/genInfo/stateAgencies.cfm>

Live Updates

All of the relevant information our office has gathered during the week will be posted to our Facebook page. By "liking" us, you will stay up-to-date about important matters across the state that affect you and your family. Click below to find our page.



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